

Commissioners OK added financial support for restaurants

ALBANY — Some 94 Linn County restaurants will soon receive another \$4,446 each — on top of \$4,000 already distributed — Commissioners Roger Nyquist, Sherrie Sprenger and Will Tucker agreed Tuesday morning.

The funds are the remainder of \$950,000 in CARES (Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security) money the county received and dedicated to help restaurants and health clubs affected by a week's shutdown in May mandated by the state due to COVID-19 concerns.

Treasurer Michelle Hawkins told the commissioners 10 health clubs received \$10,000 each.

Linn County worked with the Albany and Lebanon chambers of commerce to reach out to the local businesses.

This is the second round of the CARES funding distribution supported by the commissioners. In January, Linn County dispersed almost \$1.6 million to aid local businesses.

Board Chair Nyquist thanked chamber executives Janet Steele of Albany and Rebecca Grizzle of Lebanon, treasurer Michelle Hawkins and his fellow board members for supporting the effort to help local businesses.

Tucker said he recently delivered a check to a Lebanon restaurant owner who was extremely grateful that he was going to be able to provide money to his employees.

In other business, the commissioners:

- Were informed by county health officer Dr. William Muth that there were 70 births in May — 37 males and 33 females — and 134 deaths. About 25% of the deaths could be attributed to smoking tobacco.

- Approved establishing a no parking zone near a bridge on Quartzville Road south of Sunnyside County Park. In the summer, young people jump off the bridge into Foster Reservoir. Roadmaster Wayne Mink said there are three layers of parking at times, with vehicles sometime protruding onto the roadway. There also is a problem with trash at the site.

- Approved intergovernmental agreements with Lincoln and Marion counties to house young people at the Linn County Juvenile Detention Center at a rate of \$150 per day. Also approved was a contract with Benton County for \$392,982 for four beds at a daily rate of \$269.10 per bed, per day.

- Approved a contract with Dr. Daniel Mosher to provide medical care at the Linn Benton Juvenile Detention Center, not to exceed \$72,000 per year.

- Approved accepting a grant not to exceed \$739,262 from the state of Oregon to provide culturally responsive, low-barrier access to COVID-19 vaccinations for Linn County residents. Health Director Todd Noble said the county has provided 42 mass vaccination clinics at the Linn County Fair & Expo Center and 72 mobile unit visits. Noble said the mobile clinic has worked everywhere from Gates in the north canyon to Harrisburg near the Lane County line and Cascadia, east of Sweet Home.

- Fair & Expo Manager Randy Porter said the mass vaccination clinics have ended and the use of the meeting rooms by the Linn County Circuit Court is winding down this month. He is beginning to book events now that the state is nearing the end of the COVID-19 based restrictions.

- Approved a one-year contract between the Linn County Sheriff's Office and Benton County to house Benton County inmates at a rate of \$93.81 per day.

- Approved using \$626,910 within the Clerk's Office, Sheriff's Office and Parks Department to pay down loans from the Road Fund and make payroll adjustments. Of that amount, \$579,778 will go into the Road Department contingency fund.

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